

STATEMENT OF SCOPE

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AFFILIATED CREDENTIALING BOARD

Rule No.: OT 4

Relating to: Self-Referral of occupational therapy services

Rule Type: Permanent

1. Finding/nature of emergency (Emergency Rule only):

N/A

2. Detailed description of the objective of the proposed rule:

The objective of the proposed rule is to amend current Wisconsin Administrative Code to allow occupational therapists to self-refer occupational therapy services which would increase the number and types of services an occupational therapist may provide.

3. Description of the existing policies relevant to the rule, new policies proposed to be included in the rule, and an analysis of policy alternatives:

An occupational therapist may receive an order or a referral to perform occupational therapy services for a patient. Orders identify the need for occupational therapy evaluation and intervention while a referral is the act of requesting occupational therapy services. Currently, physicians, dentists or podiatrists may order occupational therapy evaluation. However, occupational therapists may accept referrals from a variety of health care professionals including advance practice nurses, chiropractors, optometrists, physical therapists and physician assistants. Wis. Admin. Code s. OT 4.03 (2) (b). Furthermore there are some services occupational therapist can perform without the need of a referral such as consultation, habilitation, screening, client education, wellness, prevention, environmental assessments, and work-related ergonomic services. According to Wis. Admin. Code s. OT 4.03 (2) (e) neither an order or a referral from a physician is required for evaluation or intervention if OT services are provided in an educational environment, including in a child's home if the child has disabilities.

The proposed rule seeks to clarify that occupational therapists are able to self-refer occupational therapy services along with the host of other health care professionals that are listed above. Currently, the rule allows other health care professionals to refer occupational therapy services. However, the rule does not specifically state that occupational therapists are allowed to self-refer. Occupational therapists self-referring would allow patients greater access to health care and would alleviate occupational therapists from relying solely on receiving orders and referrals from other health care professionals in order to provide health care services.

The proposed rule will also provide clarity to the process of renewing a license after 5 years by updating provisions regarding licensure renewal and reinstatement. The term reinstatement will be defined as a process by which a licensee whose license has been surrendered or revoked or has a license with unmet disciplinary requirements which has not been renewed within five years of the renewal date may apply to have their license reinstated with or without conditions.

4. Detailed explanation of statutory authority for the rule (including the statutory citation and language):

Section 15.085 (5) (b), Stats., provides that affiliated credentialing boards such as the Occupational Therapists Affiliated Credentialing Board, "[s]hall promulgate rules for its own guidance and for the

guidance of the trade or profession to which it pertains. . .” The proposed rule will provide guidance to occupational therapists regarding the topic of who may refer occupational therapy services.

Section 227.11 (2) (a), Stats., provides that, “[e]ach agency may promulgate rules interpreting the provisions of any statute enforced or administered by the agency, if the agency considers it necessary to effectuate the purpose of the statute, but a rule is not valid if the rule exceeds the bounds of correct interpretation.”

5. Estimate of amount of time that state employees will spend developing the rule and of other resources necessary to develop the rule:

State employees will spend approximately 80 hours developing the proposed rule.

6. List with description of all entities that may be affected by the proposed rule:

Licensed occupational therapists and their patients will be affected by the proposed rule.

7. Summary and preliminary comparison with any existing or proposed federal regulation that is intended to address the activities to be regulated by the proposed rule:

None.

8. Anticipated economic impact of implementing the rule (note if the rule is likely to have a significant economic impact on small businesses):

This proposed rule will have minimal or no economic impact on small businesses.

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